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JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. Lily E. Kay
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Dear Dr. Kay

Again I want to thank you for lending me your dissertation.

I found time last night to scan it. For now I have no large comments. It rings true and you have learned more about Caltech than I ever knew. (I never worked there). Perhaps at some distance and digestion I may have a broader reaction. For now just a few marginalia.

Most startling and helpful to me was your account of Pauling on the matter of the manufacture of antibodies.

I had never understood how he could attach himself to such an atrociously uncontrolled "experiment". (The speculation was brilliant whether verified later or not). You opened my eyes on how much was at stake from a material perspective.

A few months ago, I asked some of my colleagues here about the reception of that work in 1942. Evidently Landsteiner was quite furious, and complained that Peyton Rous had accepted it for publication in the Journal of Experimental Medicine without seeking wider review. However, Pauling was already a stellar figure with an enormous reputation in chemistry; in addition Landsteiner was most eager to have Pauling contribute the theoretical chapter to his forthcoming book on "The Specificity of Serological Reactions" and did not want to upset that relationship.

Elvin Kabat wrote quite critically about the alleged in vitro synthesis of antibodies in a review in 1943. I think it was not until 1946 that there was much further commentary about it.

P 269

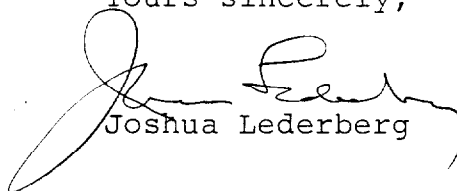
Dr. Lily E. Kay
April 19, 1988

- 2 -

I had the pleasure of attending Michael Heidelberger's 100th birthday celebration last week; this was organized by Elvin Kabat. If you wish to carry this particular point any further you might wish to take advantage of the opportunity to interview both of them.

Merrill Chase, an emeritus professor here, has access to some of Landsteiner's papers but he tells me that they are almost indecipherable. He has quite vivid recollections of the 1942 incident as well.

Yours sincerely,


Joshua Lederberg

*P.S. - Do you know whether Pauling's
patent application resulted in an issued patent?
are there not other patents in his name?*

Encls.